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Marriage - Why Won't the Catholic Church "Walk The Talk"?

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Most Reverend John Ricard
Pensacola Archdiocese
Post Office Drawer 17329
Pensacola, FL 32522

An open letter to the Pensacola Archdiocese

Dear Reverend Ricard:

I write today as an update to a letter I sent to you in March of 2002 (found at [this link](#)), lamenting both the Church's support of a law in Florida that allowed for the unilateral abandonment of infants by their mothers and the sad state of marriage today.

As you are no doubt aware the Catholic Faith in America is in true crisis. There is a widely-recognized shortage of priests, funding shortages are endemic and parish attendance and involvement is shrinking.

Yet during the same time growth of evangelical church membership has continued.

Why?

If you actually analyze these developments, you find that it comes back to three areas - family, family and family.

Three areas in which the Catholic Church has refused to lead.

There are many who are calling for the Church to become more "œliberal", as if somehow allowing women to be priests, or allowing priests to marry, will solve the problem. It won't, and doctrinally it is incompatible with the Catholic Faith. Our late Pontiff was exactly correct in his refusal to bow to these demands, which are driven by a desire to secularize the Church.

But the question continues - is the Catholic Faith as serious about its congregation as its doctrinal roots? And is the Church truly serious about doctrine "œ or is it just the public appearance of doctrine that is important?

Thus, we get to the gist of my letter.

Does the Church want its Congregation Back?

If so, then in the United States the Church is going to have to "œwalk the talk." There are over seventeen million men and women who would likely flock to the Church tomorrow were it to take a strong stand in protecting families and children.

I speak, of course, of the second point I raised in my 2002 letter "œ that of the sacrament of marriage within the Catholic Faith.

Here's a simple truth – marriage as a social institution was formed to protect all three parties to a marriage – the husband, wife, and children – from both outside interference and from the potential ill acts of either of the adults.

Marriage as a sacrament is similarly designed to protect the next generation – to fulfill one of the founding principles of Christ's ministry – that of protection of those who are unable to protect themselves.

In this the formation of the social and sacramental institutions aligned.

However, today, the social institution of marriage does anything but protect the next generation, along with the parties to the agreement. Indeed, marriage today in the secular sense is a joke. It has been under assault since the 1950s, and now that assault continues with a push to recognize "gay marriage", as if somehow extending a bankrupt institution to a new group will solve the fundamental, underlying problem.

Marriage as a social institution protected women in that historically speaking they were unable to find parity in the workforce. In addition, for a woman who had children, marriage protected her ability to nurture and raise those kids.

For men, marriage protected his ability to have and raise children, since men are incapable of gestation. Only through marriage was a man able to insure that he would be able to have progeny of his own.

Finally, for children, marriage protected their right to be raised by both a man and woman in a stable household. Every study conducted on the matter has concluded the same thing - children fare best when raised in such a two-parent household.

As a sacrament, marriage is of course tremendously important. It is one of the sacraments you can only receive once, and it finds its roots in the Bible. It is, indeed, what God has expressed as his desire for men and women who choose to propagate humanity.

So why would the Church refuse to take concrete, available steps to radically strengthen marriage, when such steps are doctrinally appropriate and as a convenient "side effect" would bring huge numbers of new and returning members to the Church?

One wonders!

Simply put, Bishop Ricard, the Church can take the following position:

1. Couples desiring to be married in the Catholic Church must enter into a binding contractual agreement between them and the Church defining their marriage and the conditions under which it can be abrogated. They must agree to submit all disputes that would otherwise be handled through the legal system to mediation and ultimately arbitration via and through the Church, with said tribunals being bound by canon law, irrespective of either celebrant's prior or later acts, with the costs of same taxed to the celebrants (just as an annulment is today.) A person who attempted to go "outside" of this agreement would run the risk of their actions being ruled improper by the Church with the material and possibly emotional costs being turned into a monetary judgment against them – a powerful incentive to not attempt it. This sort of pre-dispute binding agreement is common in other areas of your life and is completely legal – just try to buy a car or have a stock market account without agreeing to this.
2. The Church will provide sacramental marriage only. Those who wish to have a "state sanctioned" marriage may obtain one separately; the Church will not be a party to signing a document which does not conform to its doctrine.

This sort of development would bring me back to the Church immediately. It would provide myself, along with millions of other men and women who have been left “for another” without recourse of any sort, the comfort of knowing that if we were able to obtain an annulment we could marry in the Church and both have ourselves and our offspring protected. It would further bring me the comfort of knowledge that should my daughter choose to marry in the Church in the future, she and her children would likewise have that same essential protection for herself and her offspring.

It would make both “marriage of convenience” and “marriage for the purpose of fraud” highly unprofitable ventures, and essentially stop both of those practices immediately.

It would give young people a real incentive to save themselves for marriage, in that they would finally have protection for themselves and their offspring if they were to do so “ protection currently unavailable by any other means.

It would bring a pool of over seventeen million adults (those who have been abused by the current state marriage system) who currently are not Catholic a tremendous reason to look seriously at the Catholic Church for their faith needs “ finally, they could find a place where their beliefs were expressed in the form and substance of doctrine.

It would be 100% compatible with Catholic Doctrine on marriage, families and children.

It would immediately remove the current hypocrisy of signing state “marriage certificates” by the clergy which do not conform in any material respect to the Catholic Doctrine.

It would demonstrate that the Church walks the talk when it comes to marriage, families and children.

So why, Bishop Ricard, has not the Church undertaken such a thing? What prevents you as the Bishop of the Archdiocese, from implementing this here? What prevents the Church from doing so worldwide?

I see no impediment in either the law or doctrine; indeed, my study of doctrine leads me to believe that this position is mandatory for the Church to take.

*Note that a formatted copy of this can be found at [this link](#); feel free to edit as you see fit and send it to **your** bishop!*

Posted by Karl Denninger at 14:43